CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 13 June 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Alfonso García Robles (Mexico)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The 508th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is now called to order. Hereby, we begin the second part of the 1989 session of the Conference. There is no doubt that in this second part we will be able to benefit from some recent developments that may lead to an improvement in relations between the countries of East and West, particularly the Soviet Union and the United States.

The programme of work we have adopted contains various items: the prohibition of all nuclear tests; cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; prevention of an arms race in outer space; prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters; elimination of chemical weapons; the adoption of a comprehensive programme of disarmament; the conclusion of international arrangements to ensure that no one uses or threatens to use nuclear weapons against States that have no such weapons; radiological weapons and any other types of weapons of mass destruction.

In this brief statement, I should like to confine myself to a few words on three of those items: the prohibition of all nuclear tests, the elimination of chemical weapons and the comprehensive programme of disarmament. In the last resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the first of these items, it was stressed that on eight different occasions the Assembly has condemned such tests in the strongest terms, stating its conviction that the continuance of such tests will intensify the arms race, thus increasing the danger of nuclear war. The Assembly also pointed out that the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in its Final Declaration in 1985, called upon all the nuclear-weapon States to participate in the urgent negotiation and conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, as a matter of the highest priority, in this Conference on Disarmament.

In respect of the second of the items I mentioned above, that is the elimination of chemical weapons, we should bear in mind the importance of the Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and Other Interested States, which met in Paris from 7 to 11 January of the current year under the chairmanship of M. Roland Dumas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic. Mexico, which became a party to this Protocol without reservations in 1932, welcomed with satisfaction the provisions of the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference, and along with all the participating States stressed "the necessity of concluding, at an early date, a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and on their destruction", and to that end called on the Conference on Disarmament to "redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date". The convention, as we have already said, will represent no threat to the security of any State; rather, it will strengthen the security of one and all.

The third and the last of the items which, as I said at the beginning, I shall be referring to on this occasion very briefly, is that of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, which this Conference has been dealing with since 1980 through an Ad hoc Committee in which I have had the honour to occupy the chair since 1981. In the statement I made at the opening meeting of the session of the Conference for the current year on 7 February 1989, one

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may examine the many sections of the programme which have already been adopted by consensus. These confirm the well-founded conclusion reached by the Ad hoc Committee dealing with the programme last year, which is summed up in the report which the Committee submitted to the General Assembly, in the following terms:

> "Bearing in mind the terms of its mandate, the Ad hoc Committee agreed that it should resume work at the outset of the 1989 session with a firm intention of completing the elaboration of the programme for its submission to the General Assembly, at the latest, at its forty-fourth session."

I think I faithfully interpret the opinion of the members of the Conference in expressing my hope that the intention of the Ad hoc Committee as summed up in the conclusion I have just quoted will become reality. Of course, as far as I am concerned, as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee dealing with that item, you may be certain that I will do my very utmost to achieve that.

On my list of speakers for today I have the representatives of Sweden, Brazil, Morocco and Australia. I shall first call on the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Theorin.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, it is with particular satisfaction that my delegation sees you presiding over the Conference on Disarmament during the month of June. I am pleased to greet you as the dean of the international disarmament community. I should also mention the long and traditional co-operation between Mexico and Sweden in the field of disarmament, in recognition of which you and Mrs. Alva Myrdal were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

At the same time, I wish to express my sincere thanks to your predecessor as President, Ambassador Bullut of Kenya, for the effective way in which he presided over the Conference at the end of its spring session. I extend a warm welcome to the new colleagues who have taken up their functions in the CD since I last had the opportunity to address the Conference - Ambassador Ait-Chaalal of Algeria, Ambassador Vajnar of Czechoslovakia and Mr. Batsanov, the new head of the delegation of the Soviet Union. My delegation looks forward to co-operating with you, distinguished new colleagues.

For ages, man has nourished the vain hope of finally waging the war to end all wars. Even the well-known inventor and industrialist, Alfred Nobel, had this unrealistic idea. He declared that he would like to invent a substance or a machine with such terrible power of mass destruction that war would be made impossible for ever.

Today man has come to realize that as the destructive potential approaches infinity, security approaches zero. We have come to realize that, as unanimously declared by the first special session on disarmament, the accumulation of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, today constitutes much more of a threat than a protection for the future of mankind. We have unanimously concluded that the time has therefore come to put an end to this situation, and to seek security in disarmament.

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A contemporary scholar has remarked that "the arms race is a system based on faith, faith that human nature works in the way that deterrence theorists say it does, faith that deterrence itself should be credited with preventing war." This faith is now crumbling. As this faith loses its grip on our perceptions and minds, the arms race is slowly beginning to lose its momentum.

In the nuclear age, nations cannot attain security at each other's expense. They must find security together. This idea of common security was launched at the beginning of the 1980s by the Palme Commission. The former United States Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, recently pointed out that the two super-Powers now in practice subscribe to this idea. At last, nations appear to have realized that in order to attain peace, we must not prepare for war, but prepare for peace.

The first nuclear disarmament agreement ever, the INF Treaty, is being implemented. Gradually a whole category of nuclear missiles is being eliminated. In a few days the United States and the Soviet Union are to resume their bilateral Nuclear and Space Talks here in Geneva. Considerable progress had already been made in the earlier phases of the negotiations on reductions of their strategic offensive weapons. An agreement leading to significant nuclear disarmament would be yet another sign that dialogue and understanding are replacing military competition and political confrontation in international relations.

There is ample room for unilateral disarmament initiatives by the major military Powers, as evidenced in the reduction measures first announced by General Secretary Gorbachev. In the European context, both East and West have taken significant initiatives in recent months. In the twin European negotiations in Vienna aiming at further confidence-building and lower levels of conventional armaments, both sides have presented comprehensive proposals.

Sweden welcomes the recent initiative by President Bush, adopted by the Western alliance, for conventional arms reductions in Europe. My Government also notes with great satisfaction the ambition of the United States President to accelerate the Vienna negotiations on conventional force reductions in order to reach agreement within a year. As it has long been Sweden's position that all categories of nuclear weapons ought to be subject to disarmament negotiations, my Government further welcomes the fact that there now also seem to be prospects of East-West negotiations on reducing short-range nuclear forces in the not too distant future.

There is growing recognition of the fact that the use of nuclear weapons would be deeply reprehensible. One may actually speak of an international norm, an unwritten law, which is gradually gaining acceptance. The major nuclear-weapon States themselves have contributed to the process of delegitimizing nuclear weapons: not only their use, but ultimately also the very possession of nuclear weapons.

In article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty of 1968 the nuclear-weapon States undertook "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament". The United States and the Soviet Union, furthermore, in their

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joint announcement on 8 January 1985 of their agreement to commence negotiations on space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate-range, declared that ultimately these negotiations "should lead to the complete elimination of nuclear arms everywhere". The most eloquent expression of this emerging norm is the solemn declaration by the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva in 1985 that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought".

The prevailing sentiment of people all over the world since the first nuclear bomb exploded over Hiroshima almost 44 years ago is thus gradually becoming an accepted moral guideline for sovereign nation States. The Governments of the other nuclear-weapon States ought now to follow the example of the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union and confirm that a nuclear war must never be fought and that nuclear weapons should be completely eliminated everywhere.

Further, those nuclear-weapon States which have not yet done so should commit themselves not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. Such undertakings should be facilitated by a positive outcome of the unilateral and negotiated efforts to adjust conventional asymmetries and to reduce levels of conventional armaments. Such declarations would be in conformity with mankind's moral reprobation of the use of nuclear weapons, and would de facto amount to a reciprocal prohibition against the use of such weapons. This declaratory non-first-use policy should then be corroborated by a legally binding international instrument laying down the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

However, would not any use of nuclear weapons violate the dictates of public conscience? Would not any use of nuclear weapons be in contravention of fundamental principles of humanitarian law of armed conflict? The time has come to examine how this unwritten rule could be translated into binding treaty law.

A comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, to be adhered to by all States, is now more imperative than ever. It is true that in recent years the international situation has seen important changes. The relationship between the two super-Powers has improved, and progress has been made in arms limitation and disarmament measures. Yet nuclear testing continues.

In 1988, 38 nuclear explosions were recorded. China carried out 1, France 8, the United States 12, and the Soviet Union 17. Their main purpose is the further modernization of nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon States offer a multitude of technical reasons and political excuses to justify the unjustifiable. The overwhelming majority of States do not accept, and have never accepted, the reasons given. They question the legitimacy of continued nuclear testing. They do not accept that the Soviet Union and United States merely gauge the yield of each other's continuing nuclear tests. What they do demand is international verification that no nuclear tests whatsoever take place. And what they do demand is a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The latest expression of the widespread concern about the urgency of a total nuclear test ban is the initiative to convene a conference to amend the partial test-ban Treaty to convert it into a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

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Sweden hopes that the international pressure will at last catalyse agreement on starting negotiations, already long overdue, on a comprehensive test-ban treaty here in the Conference on Disarmament.

After years of frustration at the lack of progress with the test ban item, we see some hopeful signs that the stalemate could, at last, be overcome. My delegation would like to commend Ambassador Yamada for his efforts to forge a consensus on a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban. It is well know that Sweden is in favour of immediate negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. For a long time now, my delegation has been prepared to accept any mandate that advances this item and is acceptable to other delegations. With a little flexibility on all sides, an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban could be established and commence its work this very month.

A year and a half ago, the world community welcomed the INF Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States as a first step towards nuclear disarmament. It was a breakthrough, which raised great hopes and expectations. Last year, the Treaty was ratified, and the elimination of an entire class of nuclear missiles was initiated.

The twentieth anniversary of the non-proliferation Treaty was almost upon us before we could witness the beginning of the first small instalment of the nuclear-weapon States' commitments to nuclear disarmament, as provided for in article VI of this Treaty. In other words, 20 years had elapsed since the Soviet Union and the United States undertook to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. The INF Treaty was the first step. The world cannot wait another 20 years for the next step.

In the 1988 United Nations General Assembly, Sweden took the initiative for a new comprehensive United Nations study on nuclear weapons. The group of governmental experts appointed to conduct the United Nations study held its first session in March this year. Unlike the latest United Nations study, in which no nuclear-weapon State participated, three are taking part in this one: France, the Soviet Union and the United States.

The study has been commissioned to examine past and present technological trends. We will investigate the development, production and testing of nuclear weapons and nuclear doctrines as well as decision-making concerning nuclear weapons. We will look into the risks of further proliferation of nuclear weapons and the importance of preventing it. We will deal with the efforts to reduce nuclear weapons and achieve a comprehensive test ban. We will analyse verification of compliance with disarmament treaties. Finally, our ambition is to produce political recommendations and disarmament proposals. The report is due to be completed in time for the 1990 review conference of the non-proliferation Treaty, and will hopefully have an impact on the review conference.

The non-proliferation Treaty remains the most important multilateral arms limitation agreement so far. It has made a significant contribution to international stability and security. One hundred and forty States have now

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adhered to the NPT. However, a few important countries with unsafeguarded nuclear facilities are still not parties to the Treaty. This situation remains a threat to the effectiveness of the non-proliferation régime. The Swedish Government urges all countries that have not adhered to the Treaty to do so.

Next year, the fourth conference to review the operation of the NPT will be convened. This will be the last review conference before 1995. It is in 1995 that the future of the NPT régime is to be decided. The non-nuclear-weapon States parties have all fulfilled their commitments under the non-proliferation Treaty. For the credibility of the NPT régime and in order to reinforce it, it is imperative that the nuclear-weapon States too now fulfil all their obligations. For the credibility of the NPT régime, the nuclear-weapon States should promptly agree to start negotiating on a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. For the credibility of the NPT régime, the fourth review conference must be able to record further significant nuclear disarmament.

The INF Treaty was a breakthrough in several ways. For the first time history, nuclear materials are now being removed from nuclear warheads as a consequence of a disarmament agreement. My Government considers that such materials should not be recycled for weapons purposes. If used for peaceful purposes, they should be subject to IAEA safeguards. Such verification should, in fact, be an integral part of a continuing process towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It is one matter, however, to safeguard fissionable material transferred from nuclear warheads to peaceful uses; it is an entirely different matter to prohibit the production of additional fissionable materials for weapons purposes. For many years, Sweden has urged that such production be prohibited.

My Government welcomes the decision, announced by President Gorbachev last April, that the Soviet Union will this year cease the production of highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons purposes, and plans to shut down this year and next year two reactors producing plutonium for weapons, without putting any new reactors into operation. At the same time, we note that the production of plutonium and tritium for weapons has been discontinued in the United States. In Sweden's view, this constitutes a propitious situation for the complete cessation of the production of, and agreed prohibition of, the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. Such a cut-off would not only contribute to halting the nuclear arms race, but also facilitate the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. An important step towards and a pre-condition for a verified cut-off is the complete separation of the military and civil nuclear sectors in all the nuclear-weapon States. Sweden therefore urges all States to agree on the complete cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes.

There is an urgent need for naval disarmament - not least nuclear naval disarmament - and there is a need for maritime confidence-building measures. Sweden supports the suggestion put forward by the Palme Commission two months ago for the prohibition of all sea-borne nuclear weapons other than those

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specifically designated by agreement, as an interim measure in anticipation of comprehensive nuclear disarmament. My Government welcomes the plans of the United States Navy unilaterally to phase out several types of tactical nuclear missiles.

For several years now Sweden has argued that long-range sea-based cruise missiles should be banned; that all tactical nuclear weapons on board warships should be taken ashore and not be on board on routine patrols; that the current laws of sea warfare should be modernized; and that the outdated practice of neither confirming nor denying the presence or absence of nuclear weapons on board should be abandoned. Just a few weeks ago further deliberations on naval armaments and disarmament took place in the UNDC. On that occasion Sweden introduced two working papers: one concerning a multilateral agreement for the prevention of incidents at sea, and another concerning sea-mines.

Security at sea is a function of the conduct of all States with national navies. It should thus, in Sweden's view, be in the interest of all States, regardless of the size of their navies, to achieve an international régime for the prevention of incidents. The peaceful character of the seas and oceans - common to us all - could be enhanced by strengthening existing international law. Existing bilateral agreements on the prevention of incidents at sea have generally been regarded as useful and successful. It could be worth while to build on the provisions in these agreements in order to create a multilateral code of conduct.

There are several reasons why a number of States see merit in a multilateral agreement. Firstly, the existing bilateral agreements have been concluded between major naval Powers of opposing military alliances. However, the many countries which do not belong to any of the major military alliances also have their concerns. A multilateral agreement could be one way of meeting the security concerns of these countries. Secondly, concluding a multitude of bilateral agreements may create a confusing situation. We should instead endeavour to build a straightforward and transparent system of international norms to be applied in this area. Thirdly, a multilateral agreement on the prevention of incidents at sea would be an important maritime confidence-building measure and could thus contribute to enhancing not only security at sea, but also international peace and security in general. My Government favours the initiation of negotiations for a multilateral agreement on the prevention of incidents at sea. As you will recall, we have proposed that the Conference on Disarmament should add this matter to its agenda.

It is my Government's view that a comprehensive and effective ban on chemical weapons within the near future is absolutely necessary. The risk of the further spread and use of chemical weapons is otherwise going to remain with us for ever. People all over the world are concerned about chemical weapons, and recognize the imperative need to ban them completely. Now it is up to politicians and diplomats to face this challenge.

At the close of the spring session, my delegation gave its detailed views in the plenary on the current stage of the chemical weapons negotiations. I will therefore limit myself to a few basic considerations. The Conference on Disarmament has made considerable progress towards a chemical weapons ban in

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recent years. After the Paris Conference, which underscored the urgency of our task, the machinery set up here in Geneva - under the creative guidance of Ambassador Morel - has taken up important aspects of the challenge before us. But, unfortunately, not enough political commitment has yet been devoted to some of the most problematic issues and key areas. We are, for example, not yet close to solving the difficult questions connected with challenge inspections. We have not made enough progress on the question of the Executive Council; nor on the order of destruction; nor on the effective total prohibition of the use of chemical weapons.

Instead of focusing on these and other crucial problems, much energy has been spent on less urgent issues and also on new and probably less fruitful concepts. This is, of course, not due to anybody's bad intentions. It is simply because a strong enough political commitment has not yet been mobilized. The technicalities will be far from impossible to overcome, once the political commitment is manifested. It is unfortunate that recent positive developments in other areas of disarmament do not yet seem to have reached the area of chemical weapons. If that issue were to be energetically addressed by the two super-Powers, giant steps could be taken within a few months.

The only new initiative in this area is the Canberra Conference. It can make a useful contribution if it increases knowledge within the chemical industry about the implications of the coming convention, and encourages the industry to co-operate in order to implement its provisions. What that Conference must not do is limit our focus to the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. That would distract from rather than support the work here in Geneva. The only solution to the threat posed by chemical weapons is a comprehensive convention, and we must make a concerted effort to ensure its speedy conclusion.

There has been a steady improvement in the international political climate in recent years. There has been remarkable progress in the super-Power dialogue. The United Nations has experienced a series of successes in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. At last, nations have come to realize that they cannot attain security at each other's expense. They have to seek security in common. Nations have failed to end all wars by waging war. To attain peace, nations must wage peace.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Sweden for her statement and for her kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the next speaker, the distinguished representative of Brazil, Ambassador Azambuja.

Mr. AZAMBUJA (Brazil): Mr. President, my delegation wishes to express very warmly its congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference for this month of June, when we initiate our summer session. Brazil and Mexico are not only nations of the same region and the same cultural background, but have always enjoyed extremely friendly bilateral relations, and you, Sir, as a former ambassador to my country, have given a major contribution to that fortunate climate. I will not touch upon your very well-known personal achievements and contributions in the field of disarmament, lest I devote my entire statement to them. You will forgive me

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if I recall early days in Mexico in the 1960s when I, as a junior member of the Brazilian delegation, worked with you in trying to put together the régime to keep Latin America free from nuclear weapons. Your inspired leadership at that time remains to me an example of diplomacy conducted with great skill and with great statesmanship. I wish then, Sir, every success to you as our new President.

I would also like to profit from this occasion to thank our former presidents for the months of April and March for the very good job. I mean Ambassador Simon Bullut of Kenya and my dear friend Ambassador Yamada of Japan. I am also glad to see Mr. Batsanov as the head of the delegation of the Soviet Union to the CD. I hope to have with him the same very fruitful relations I enjoyed with his predecessor, Ambassador Yuri Nazarkin.

The time the CD is devoting to item 4 of its agenda clearly reflects the willingness expressed in the consensus Final Declaration of the Paris Conference to redouble efforts towards the elaboration of a chemical weapons convention. My delegation, by words and deeds, has fully supported this thrust, conscious that a universal and non-discriminatory instrument on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons is an attainable though complex objective, which certainly justifies comprehensive, detailed and intensive negotiations.

Having said that, I must also stress, like others before me, that such a worthy endeavour, such an urgent endeavour, should not, by any token, entail neglect by this body of the totality of its obligations as the sole multilateral forum mandated by the international community to negotiate, with similar determination, different measures and agreements vital to world peace and security. A progressive and ultimately exclusive concentration by this Conference on one area of its work, combined with the gradual abandonment of the remainder, would be in contradiction with its commitment to the cause of general and complete disarmament, to which it is bound not only by the Final Document of the first special session but also by the letter and spirit of many General Assembly resolutions. Bearing this in mind, and firmly convinced that through a meaningful and in-depth search for generally acceptable formulae, this Conference will finally cover, as it must in an appropriate way, the whole spectrum of disarmament questions. I would like to focus now on some aspects of items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of our agenda, which in my opinion require urgent review and action by the CD. This will demand, in some instances, a minimum amount of recapitulation, for which I beg the indulgence of this plenary.

In 1982 the CD established a working group under item 1 of the agenda with a mandate limited to verification and compliance with regard to a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The alleged underlying reason for the restrictive character of that exercise was that the then apparent standstill in the negotiations between the super-Powers did not allow for a more structured and broader approach towards a multilaterally negotiated CTBT. The obvious implication was that the degree of involvement of the world community in matters related to its own collective survival was to be dependent on the state of the relationship between the super-Powers.

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The Brazilian delegation did not then, as it does not now, share that perception, and only agreed to work under a mandate derived from its premises on a strictly temporary basis, assuming all the while, as was clearly agreed, that it would soon be revised and consequently upgraded. These expectations, far from being idealistic, were from 1972 onwards concretely based on the various resolutions of the General Assembly stipulating that we should promptly initiate multilateral negotiations on a CTBT. The fact that a consensus decision on these terms was blocked, and that the work done on item 1 of the agenda under those limitations did prove fruitless, indicated as far back as 1983 the evident pointlessness of abiding by the 1982 or other similar mandate any longer.

In subsequent years there have been profound changes in the nature of the negotiations between the super-Powers in their quest for mutually acceptable higher stages of arms control at undiminished levels of security. As part of this process, confidence-building measures have been devised and implemented on an unprecedented scale, and methods for verification of compliance have been refined to a level of detail never before deemed feasible, to the extent that past allegations of the impracticability of a truly verifiable CTB have in fact become unsustainable. It is a matter of record now that this bilateral convergence on disarmament-related issues prompted the successful negotiation of the INF Treaty, which in turn paves the way for a future agreement on 50 per cent reductions in the strategic nuclear forces of the super-Powers. It is also currently assumed that the momentum thus far generated will next lead them to the ratification of the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty and the threshold nuclear test-ban Treaty.

While this joint search by the United States and the Soviet Union for mutually acceptable terms of disarmament appears to be steadily under way, this Conference has yet to begin work on agenda item 1 which is commensurate with its inherent negotiating capacity. The proposals put forward to that end by the Group of 21, as contained in CD/520/Rev.2 and more recently in CD/829, have earned considerable support from a great number of delegations around this table, and forthright approval by the Group of Socialist Countries and China. These proposals have nevertheless failed to reach the necessary consensus, though evidently not on account of a "difficult political climate between the super-Powers", as alleged in the past for the dismissal of similar initiatives. This time it became more apparent that the main reason for failure is the persistence, against all logic and the will of the international community, of a notion that multilateral and bilateral negotiations on a CTB are mutually exclusive, whatever their time frame, and thus that the CD should not exercise its negotiating prerogatives in dealing with its agenda item 1.

Confronted with these circumstances, it was obviously only a question of time before members of the CD started searching for other ways to commence effective multilateral negotiations towards a CTBT. A viable alternative to that end was readily identified in the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, more specifically in its second preambular paragraph and the first paragraph of its article II, which

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when taken together pointed to the possibility of transforming it, through an amending conference, into a CTBT. Last year, in what became known as the Six-nation Initiative, Mexico, Indonesia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia and Venezuela did present to the original parties to the CTBT an amendment proposal with that objective.

At this point I would like to stress that, as a party without reservations to the Moscow Treaty, Brazil has traditionally supported the idea of converting it into a comprehensive nuclear weapon test ban. In 1985, for instance, the Brazilian delegation, in yet another attempt to establish a subsidiary body under item 1 of the agenda, submitted a draft decision to this Conference (CD/602) where it was indicated that "taking into account the need to achieve the full implementation of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, of 1963, the Conference on Disarmament [would decide] to establish an ad hoc committee on item 1 of its agenda, nuclear test ban, in order to fulfil that purpose."

To further detail the position of my country on this matter I will add that in our view the mandate of the amending conference should be strictly in line with the preamble of the Moscow Treaty, which sets the objective of the "discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time".

Our expectations are that the convening of a conference to amend and transform the Moscow Treaty into a CTBT which Brazil would not fail to attend, is not to be interpreted as precluding the chances that the Conference on Disarmament will adequately consider its agenda item 1, a sentiment that we hope can be shared by the sponsors of that initiative. Moreover, my delegation is firmly convinced that work with the same objective in both forums could well be highly complementary as long as the mandate conferred on a subsidiary body dedicated to the consideration of agenda item 1 of the CD conformed with the naturally negotiating basis of a conference to amend the Moscow Treaty.

The same determination with which we should seek consensual terms to begin work on item 1 of our agenda is also required to enable us to overcome recurrent difficulties in dealing with two other "nuclear items" on the agenda, namely cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and prevention of nuclear war including all related matters. While it is widely argued that these items 2 and 3 do require further evaluation before actual negotiations can be pursued with an acceptable margin of success, there has not been a corresponding willingness to establish subsidiary bodies in the CD to begin at least to fill this gap.

As to the other nuclear item on our agenda, on negative security assurances, my delegation has consistently maintained that there can be no effective guarantee against the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons while the nuclear-weapon States seem intent on perpetuating their atomic arsenals. This perception has not in any way prevented us from contributing to the current work being done in the Ad hoc Committee under item 6. We feel that there could be a different approach to this question, but we are nevertheless willing to participate in efforts that earnestly aim

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at creating or refining concepts related to it. A similar constructive disposition by all concerned would probably enable the CD to establish subsidiary bodies under items 2 and 3 as well.

Impasses and difficult negotiating situations, although disagreeable, are common circumstances in our trade, which in a way never fails to be enriched by the very exercise of surmounting them. Sometimes, though, these circumstances arise in such an unexpected way that their impact has a mostly disquieting effect, especially when it is generally perceived that all conditions needed to start meaningful work have already been met. One example at hand is what happened in the Ad hoc Committee on outer space during the spring session of the Conference. As we all know, this subsidiary body was established by the CD in pursuance of recommendations of the General Assembly based on the proposition that outer space is to be preserved from the same scourge that plagues other environments of our planet.

We in the CD worked out an adequate mandate so that we could pursue this crucial objective; a suitable programme of work was devised in order to orient these efforts, and it was even agreed that last year's scenario would be changed so as to assure the most convenient acceptable conditions to start our endeavours. The Brazilian delegation, for its part, was ready to work within this context taking into account the principle that the non-militarization of outer space also constitutes an essential pre-condition for the adoption of significant measures for regional disarmament. Many other delegations had also indicated that they too were prepared to expand their views on different aspects of the subject matter. All of this effort was to little avail.

The Ad hoc Committee on item 5 has yet to properly address its agenda because no amount of preliminary discussions have conclusively settled the procedural arguments that in reality mask one basic question: whether the present legal régime applied to outer space is or is not sufficient to prevent an arms race from developing in that environment. The Brazilian delegation has consistently maintained that the present legal régime must be expanded and enhanced if we are to succeed in checking the ongoing threats of the militarization of outer space. At the same time, my delegation is ready to further the debate on any facet of this question with a considerable amount of flexibility. But we will not condone any attempt to prejudge the final work of the Ad hoc Committee, or any other attempt that would lead it to an impasse in contradiction with the basic assumptions under which it was established.

The frankness with which I have tried to express these considerations should be interpreted solely as another effort to be brief and to clarify matters and permit us to pursue our common objective, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Our deep concern is that any initiative to debate the central elements of this matter in other forums might not only indicate an intent to complement the work being done here but also reflect a disappointment with the capacity of the CD to fully discharge its responsibilities.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Brazil for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco, Ambassador Benhima.

Mr. BENHIMA (Morocco) (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. President. It is a great pleasure for me to address my heartfelt congratulations to you on taking up the presidency of the Conference. I would also like to pay special tribute to your dedication to the cause of peace and disarmament, for which you have ceaselessly striven for many years and for which you have received the most highly valued token of recognition - the Nobel Peace Prize. Your long experience in the field of disarmament and your skill as a practised negotiator, together with your legendary patience, will, I am sure, give new impetus to your work during the summer session. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Batsanov of the USSR and assure him of the co-operation of my delegation.

This time last year the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was taking place. One of the subjects that was omnipresent in all the statements and underlay all the discussions was that of outer space and the risks of militarization that are threatening it. Last September's issue of the UN Chronicle listed this same subject at the forefront of the six obstacles that prevented a consensus on the closing document.

The concerns of the international community concerning the spread of the arms race to outer space were once again the subject of a lengthy debate at the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly last autumn. Out of the 76 resolutions that the Assembly adopted on disarmament questions, the one on outer space was alone in receiving the votes of all delegations with the exception of one. This near-unanimous support of all Members of the United Nations for resolution 43/70 is the universal expression of the will to work for the achievement of a goal shared by the whole of mankind, that of preventing an arms race in outer space. This resolution does not confine itself to recalling that space is the common heritage of mankind. It also reaffirms that the exploration and use of space must be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development. It expresses international concern about the danger that would hover over mankind if there were an arms race in space. In order to grapple with this danger, the resolution calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to protect space from the arms race and to promote it as an area for co-operation and use for peaceful purposes. The two main space Powers were also requested to pursue their bilateral negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement for preventing an arms race in outer space. However, what we should bear in mind in this resolution is the primordial role it grants to the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of one or several multilateral agreements on the question. It is a role that arises out of paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which states: "In order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held".

In order to implement this paragraph, the Conference on Disarmament has had an ad hoc committee since 1985. Unfortunately, and because of the very modest mandate given to it, this body has not been in a position to respond to the expectations of the international community. Far from embarking on a negotiating process on the question of the preventon of an arms race in outer space, its terms limited the scope of the Committee's task to an examination,

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as a first step ... through substantive and general consideration. It is true that these terms were the result of a laboriously negotiated compromise. But it is also true that this compromise was limited in time in so far as the negotiating process was to get under way at a later stage. Five years afterwards, we are obliged to recognize with regret that the terms of the mandate have become immutable, since every attempt to revise them along the lines of paragraph 80 of the Final Document has met with a blunt refusal. Over the years, this has led to the consecration of a status quo which could paralyse a body in which we placed high hopes.

Providing the Ad hoc Committee on outer space with a negotiating mandate is not an end in itself. This mandate constitutes the only path which has been traced for us by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, just as it is the best way of responding to the concerns of the international community. Inspired by all these considerations, the neutral and non-aligned countries tried once again last spring to follow up the resolutions I have referred to. It was our ardent wish to make a reality of the calling of our Conference for negotiation, by proposing an appropriate mandate for this Committee. However, as in previous years, it was not possible to achieve consensus with regard to this objective. The political responsibility that we unanimously shoulder as members of the Conference has encouraged us to persevere in our position of flexibility, without which the Committee would not have seen the light of day. The re-establishment of this subsidiary body gives us some satisfaction, but we nevertheless feel utterly disappointed at the failure to respect the scenario which has presided over the adoption of the mandate in recent years. Moreover, it was our wish that the belated adoption of this mandate would encourage the members of the Conference to embark on the work of the Committee with all due speed. But this was not the case. Quite the contrary, a procedural imbroglio prevented the Committee from carrying out its mandate, leaving only a few meetings during the spring session. In this connection my delegation would like to express the wish that such procedural problems will not arise in the future, either to delay or to prevent this body from discharging the function the Conference has entrusted to it.

The work accomplished by the Ad hoc Committee on outer space has moved forward the examination and identification of various questions relating to the prevention of an arms race in space. The debates that took place in the Committee, although sometimes repetitive, did provide a wealth of information because they not only led to an understanding of a number of problems whose complexity has been unanimously acknowledged, but also provided us with a better perception of the positions that were set out. In fact it is in this same spirit that my delegation intends to make a few comments on the three points of the Committee's programme of work.

With regard to the first question, concerning the examination and identification of issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, my delegation feels that everything should be done to ensure that outer space remains the common heritage of mankind. If such an objective, which is highly prized by all members of the international community, is to be attained, it is imperative to opt for making the exploration and use of space an area for international co-operation, whose purpose must be exclusively peaceful and in the interest of all countries without any exception

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whatsoever. The advent of the atom and the conquest of space have been the two major scientific and technological achievements of this second half of our century. The atom has been the object of many civilian applications that have given rise to great hopes for the whole of mankind. It has, alas, also led to the development of an entire arsenal of nuclear weapons that are capable of destroying human civilization. As to the conquest of space, it has certainly opened up new fields of research and activity. In this way it has been at the origin of solutions found to the many problems that man has been facing on Earth. They include weather forecasts that have been made more precise and more rapid thanks to satellites. Exploration of the Earth by means of remote sensing has produced unexpected results in agriculture, hydrology, geology, environment, oceanography. I might also mention satellite telecommunications and radio navigation, etc.

Unfortunately, the use of space has not been confined solely to peaceful or civilian purposes. Out of the 2,500 satellites that have been launched since 1957, more than 75 per cent perform purely military functions: observation, surveillance, photography, missile launch detection, surveillance of theatres of conflict, early warning, and so forth. In addition to these activities, which in reality represent the extension of purely civilian space activities for military requirements, there are the recent developments that have occurred in the 1980s, namely, the development, testing and, very likely, the deployment of new systems of weapons which can be used in or from space. In the light of what I have said, we must recognize that the conquest of space is not separable from the arms race, and especially the nuclear arms race. Moreover, the exploration and use of space have been carried out in the global context of East-West rivalry and the arms race between the major Powers. It is perhaps this observation that inspired the prophecy by Christopher Lee and Bhupendra Jasani, in their book Countdown to Space War, that: "if the two super-Powers go to war any time after, say, 1990, it is very likely that the war would start in space."

With regard to existing agreements relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, my delegation considers that the body of law that is applicable to outer space is insufficient, and continues to believe that the Charter of the United Nations is the basis of the rules of international law that govern all space activities. It is natural that the provisions of the Charter governing relations among States on Earth should guide their activities in space. It is thus that the scope of the principle of the non-use of force should be broadened to encompass space in order to ensure protection of space objects. Nevertheless, realism prompts us to share the view of those that consider that since this same principle is not respected on Earth, it would be presumptuous to count on its application in space. This lacuna in the Charter nevertheless gave rise to international awareness of the need for space law. This law benefited from the fact that this need for rules was felt and later accepted and understood by the instigators of the conquest of space. It has been given shape progressively by a series of international instruments - notably the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial bodies, the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space

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Objects, the 1975 Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the 1979 Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, as well as a number of bilateral agreements, the most well-known of which is the ABM Treaty.

These multilateral agreements have codified a number of principles, such as the prohibition of the placing in orbit around the Earth of any object with nuclear weapons or any weapon of mass destruction; the use of the Moon and the other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes; the prohibition of the development of military bases, the testing of weapons of all types and the conduct of military manoeuvres on celestial bodies; and the prohibition of testing of nuclear weapons or the conduct of nuclear explosions in space. It is true that these principles have impeded the arms race in space. Nevertheless, they were not such as to form a juridical barrier preventing any militarization or arms race in space. These rules are perceived as having value as a string of restrictions limiting certain military activities without its being possible to incorporate them into a global ban. There are therefore a number of gaps and loopholes which have allowed what the experts in this field call - and rightly so - the "creeping arms race". In this context I could cite, for instance, the 1967 outer space Treaty, the limited scope of which has been recognized by all. This Treaty bans the introduction into space of nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction, but leaves open the possibility of placing in space other weapons such as anti-satellite weapons or anti-ballistic-missile systems. Another problem of great importance is that pertaining to "demilitarization" as contemplated in these treaties. The scope of this concept is limited solely to stellar space, which means the Moon and the other celestial bodies, depriving it of any effect on the remainder of Cosmic space. Moreover, clashing interpretations continue to prevent an identical interpretation of the words "peaceful purposes". To these juridical lacunae we should add the observation that the evolution of space science and technology, combined with space projects and programmes, especially military ones, is progressing more rapidly than space law. We must therefore conclude that current international legal instruments are insufficient to prevent an arms race in space. This is why our analysis tallies with that of many delegations in emphasizing the urgent need to fill out, strengthen and broaden the present legal régime in order to effectively prevent any arms race whatsoever in outer space.

The discussions that have taken place in the Ad hoc Committee on outer space since its establishment in 1985 have been fruitful with regard to the third part of its work. The Committee has received a certain number of proposals which prompt two comments. Firstly, these proposals displayed variety and came from all the groups, which represents a laudable collective effort and endeavour. Secondly, these proposals and these initiatives, through their diversity and the large number of sponsors, have shown that there was not only food for thought here, but also work to be done and an effort to be undertaken. In this connection, my delegation in no way intends to review all these proposals, which the Mongolian delegation has taken the welcome initiative of compiling in document CD/905. Nor does it intend to express a preference for one proposal or another, because it believes that the option or options that will be finally approved by the Committee have already been dictated to it by the objective being pursued, which is the prevention of

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an arms race in outer space. This is especially so as the ways and means of achieving it have already been defined both in the Final Document and in the relevant General Assembly resolution I have already referred to.

What my delegation would like to underscore, is that the Ad hoc Committee on outer space is at a decisive turning-point in its work. The past four years of work have enabled it to conduct a diagnostic study of space, and even to carry out a synoptic analysis of the activities, especially the military activities, that take place there. From this work the Committee must now proceed to the next phase, which will involve devising appropriate answers to the questions that have been raised and to rectify the anomalies that have been perceived in the "juridical fabric" of space. This is no easy task, because we are not unaware of the pitfalls facing the Committee in its task - especially as there are many deep divergences among delegations. Nevertheless, whatever the magnitude of this disagreement, it should not constitute a handicap which would paralyse the Committee, but should be an incentive for us to renew our efforts to attain our common goal.

Obviously, our view of what we hoped for from this Committee is optimistic. Above and beyond the political distance which separates those who want a simple strengthening of present space law and those who urge radical solutions through new international instruments, especially a ban on the use of force in space or a ban on placing weapons of all types in space, or yet again those who are in favour of the adoption of limited measures designed to increase confidence or guarantee the immunity of artificial satellites, we may observe two common denominators: a collective - although sometimes unequal - perception of the danger of the militarization of space, and a common will to work for the prevention of an arms race in space. The two components of this observation fortify us in our evaluation of the work accomplished so far by the Committee. Moreover, they give us reasons for trusting in the capacity of this body to deal squarely with the question of proposals and initiatives capable of offering a concrete response to the risks of an arms race in outer space.

In 1984, that is to say a year before the Conference on Disarmament established its Ad hoc Committee on outer space, the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco devoted its spring session to the "Ethics of space conquest". One of its distinguished members, the American astronaut, Neil Armstrong, who was the first man to walk on the Moon, gave a presentation entitled "New knowledge of the Earth through the exploration of space". He concluded this presentation by noting that the exploration of space has in fact led to very precious knowledge about the Earth, and that the exploration of space has also been the exploration of the Earth. This statement, which underlines clearly the close link between space and the Earth, prompts me to express the wish that space will continue to bring about beneficial co-operation and peace for all the peoples of our planet. Moreover, may the present work of the Ad hoc Committee take the direction that will lead it to the adoption of measures or agreements so that space, this natural extension of our planet, is spared the arms race for ever.

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I would not wish to conclude my statement without warmly congratulating Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia, who is chairing the Ad hoc Committee on outer space for the second time. The talents he displayed during his first term as Chairman were unanimously appreciated. We wish him every success in his new term and assure him of our full and total consideration.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Morocco for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. We have now heard three speakers. The fourth speaker today is His Excellency the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans, who has been detained this morning by unavoidable official duties. Consquently we will hear his statement this afternoon, starting at 3.30 in plenary session. Meanwhile I call on the distinguished representative of Iran, who has asked for the floor.

Mr. ASADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): It is with profound sorrow and regret that I inform the Conference on Disarmament of the sad and untimely demise of Imam Ruhollah Khomeini, leader of the Islamic revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on 3 June 1989. The Islamic Republic of Iran and indeed the whole Islamic world have lost an irreplaceable leader, a great scholar of theology and philosophy, a man of knowledge and virtue whose long and ceaseless struggle for the cause of Islam and the oppressed needs no explanation. Imam Khomeini's noble crusade for the oppressed and for the reassertion of the Muslim's identity and dignity and justice for the oppressed won him the love and admiration of the oppressed masses across the world, Muslim masses included. His exemplary valour and determination in defence of Islamic principles and values and for the realization of the Islamic ideals have indeed awakened a new sense of identity among the world's Muslims and laid the corner-stone for a fully fledged Islamic renaissance. The popular sentiments of grieving masses in various countries after the departure of the Imam bear witness to the fact that he has left his indelible imprint forever on the conscience and memory of the present generation. Future generations will undoubtedly cherish the great values of the life and struggle of Imam Khomeini and his dedication to truth and justice.

On my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation, Ambassador Nasseri, the Government and people of Iran, I would like to thank all those who have expressed their sympathy and condolences, either personally, or through signing the condolence book which was open at our residence last week. I assure you all, distinguished fellow diplomats, that my Government and the family of Imam Khomeini will be duly informed of your sympathy.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I should now like to refer to various matters connected with our work. As is customary, we are to adopt our programme of work for the second part of the present session, and the secretariat has also received requests from non-member States to participate in our work. If there is no objection, we will convene an informal meeting once we have reached the end of the list of speakers in order to examine these matters. We will then resume the plenary meeting to formalize such agreements as we may arrive at. If there is no objection, we shall proceed in that manner.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I have asked the secretariat to circulate for the information of the Conference a copy of a communication received from the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, in which reference is made to paragraph 23 of the Committee's report. In that paragraph, "recalling the request in the Final Document of the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty with respect to article V, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite the Conference on Disarmament to proceed promptly with consideration of further measures in the field of disarmament for the prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed, the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof. In this connection, the Preparatory Committee decided to request the Conference on Disarmament to enable States parties not members of the Conference on Disarmament to participate in this consideration in accordance with its rules of procedure".

If there are no other speakers for the moment, I shall now suspend the plenary meeting and convene the informal meeting we agreed to hold today to consider the programme of work and requests from non-member States to participate in our work.

The meeting was suspended on 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 11.38 a.m.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The 508th plenary meeting is resumed to adopt decisions on the matters dealt with informally. As regards the programme of work (CD/WP.364), I understand that there are no objections from any of the members of the Conference. Since that is the case, the programme of work is approved.

Concerning the requests from Syria and Jordan to participate in our work, contained in documents CD/WP.365 and Add.1, I understand that here too there are no observations or objections, and consequently we can approve them by consensus. The requests are approved.

As I announced earlier, we will now suspend the plenary meeting until 3.30 p.m., when the Conference will be addressed by His Excellency the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans. The secretariat informs me that, as agreed by the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, Contact Group A of that Committee will meet immediately after the plenary has been suspended, and until 1 p.m., in this same room.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at 3.40 p.m.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The 508th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

On behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, I have special pleasure in welcoming His Excellency the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans, who has come to address the Conference. Senator Evans, who has a solid academic record in the field of constitutional law, has pursued a brilliant political career in his country's Parliament since 1978, rising to the delicate responsibility of management of government

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business in the Senate. The Senator also has extensive international experience as a result of his performance of high-level government functions, and has already followed our work on 7 February 1985, when he attended the 289th plenary meeting as Assistant Minister to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. His second visit to the Conference bears witness to Australia's interest and active participation in all disarmament matters. I now give the floor to His Excellency the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans.

Mr. EVANS (Australia): I am very pleased indeed to be able to address the Conference on Disarmament again, Mr. President, and particularly on this occasion to do so under your presidency. Your personal outstanding and tireless work in the field of arms control and disarmament is very well known to us in Australia, not least, of course, because of the award to you of the Nobel Peace Prize. I am deeply flattered to have the opportunity to speak in a Conference under your presidency.

We are passing through a period of the greatest significance for the future of the international community. We are, as so many have acknowledged, at a watershed, a turning-point in international relations. The end of the cold war has not been marked by a single day on which hostilities ceased or a peace treaty was signed. Rather it has been a matter of the major Powers rethinking their national interests and the means of advancing them, and embarking on a major overhaul of their whole approach to nuclear deterrence and the arms race.

In November 1985 in this city, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev, as he then was, jointly declared that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. In the years since we have witnessed a quite extraordinary succession of developments. In October 1986 we saw one of the first tangible gains, the Stockholm Agreement on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Europe. Then came the historic INF Agreement, signed in December 1987 and ratified in June 1988. In March 1989 the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe opened in Vienna. Both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization have now tabled proposals in these negotiations that can - and I believe will - transform Europe's political and military landscape.

These heartening developments have not been confined to Europe. We have also seen the Soviet Union withdraw its forces from Afghanistan; sustained and productive efforts to bring to an end debilitating regional conflicts in the Persian Gulf, southern Africa and Indo-China; and the remarkable spectacle during last year's joint verification experiment of Soviet and American personnel spending several weeks working at the Nevada and Semipalatinsk nuclear test sites.

The present Soviet leadership now acknowledges that the Soviet Union's military build-up was excessive and that some substantial unilateral actions by the Soviet Union, such as the force cuts announced by President Gorbachev in December last year, were appropriate. Unilateral steps are, of course, only the beginning. Deeper and more far-reaching measures, matching reality to the new rhetoric and atmospherics, can only come about in partnership with others. The Western Powers have been prudently cautious. We have not

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forgotten the high expectations and deep disappointment associated with détente in the 1970s. It is apparent, however, that the West now fully recognizes the enormous potential for mutually beneficial change inherent in the totality of reform taking place in the USSR, and is prepared to respond constructively. Above all it is the linkage, indeed the synergy, between internal reform and new thinking on foreign and defence policy in the USSR that is so profoundly encouraging. The Soviet Union is beginning to build into its internal processes the vital checks and balances of democratic principles.

The Australian Government has welcomed and encouraged the strong and balanced improvement in East/West relations in recent years. Unprecedented opportunities have emerged from this to limit, and limit decisively, the global arms race and to build in its place constructive and co-operative relationships responsive to international problems that for too long have been overshadowed by our preoccupation with military security. It is our profound hope that the attitudes and outlooks characteristic of recent decades will be progressively changed all around the world, allowing all countries gradually and naturally to de-escalate their defence preparations without compromising their security. At the same time, the role of formal agreements remains of irreducible importance. In our view, it is essential that we press ahead and steadily expand the body of international law relating to security. We must seize the present window of opportunity, and help ensure that it remains open.

This Conference has quite a central role to play in this endeavour. We have in the past shared the frustration of many members of the Conference on Disarmament that it could not work when East/West relations deteriorated and was not allowed to work when they improved. This led, in turn, to successive rounds of debate about which issues properly belonged in the multilateral arena. Australia very much hopes that this sterile debate can now be put behind us. Circumstances have moved far beyond the stage where our collective concern was somehow to find a way of breaking the log-jam. We now have the will to negotiate, and a clear immediate agenda that will tax the resources of all countries concerned. In our view the basis of a constructive partnership between bilateral and multilateral forums can be readily discerned, and the respective forums should now focus their energies fully on completing priority tasks.

My predecessor as Australian Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden, addressed this Conference in August 1984. I think there is a stark contrast between the tone and content of my remarks today and the very sombre and impatient note of that earlier address. This in itself is testimony to how far we have come in a comparatively short time. It is equally striking, however, that the agenda that Mr. Hayden was commenting on, and indeed that I was commenting on in early 1985 when I spoke here, as you said - that agenda is exactly the same as that before the Conference today. This underscores my observation that the CD must now focus on the issues on which it has the competence and the authority to conclude solid, verifiable agreements.

Let me comment first on the subject of chemical weapons. This Conference has a unique role and responsibility as the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. In exercising that role and discharging that

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responsibility, the Conference is engaged in an undertaking of immense significance in the negotiation of a comprehensive and universal convention on chemical weapons. The improvement in international relations which is a feature of our times does present us with an opportunity to conclude the CW convention. This is an opportunity which cannot and must not be lost. All of us are united in our abhorrence of these weapons and our commitment to ensure that they are banned for all time. Through a universal convention, the Conference will make an historic contribution to international security and stability. The Paris Conference, held in January, provided the impetus for the negotiating process this year. The collective call by 149 States to intensify the chemical weapons convention negotiations, and to conclude the convention at the earliest date, could not have been clearer. We appreciate very greatly, may I say, the energetic and creative approach of the Chairman of the CW Committee, Ambassador Morel of France, whom I had the pleasure of meeting earlier this afternoon, in injecting the international community's expression of commitment at the Paris Conference into the work of this Committee. Under his leadership, the Committee has the prospect of recording real progress this year.

Others who have addressed this plenary in recent times have asserted that the final text of the CW convention is within reach. I share that conviction. I am convinced that, with a concerted and sustained effort by all members of this Conference, the text of the convention can be finalized in the very near future. As a result of developments in recent years, most of the major conceptual issues, and many of the details, have been resolved. This has been achieved through the active participation of the entire membership of the Conference, which is essential if the convention is to have universal validity. A perusal of the "rolling text" reveals that a considerable amount of technical detail apparently still awaits resolution. However, this is not a reason for prolonging the negotiation process, which has now been going on for many years. Rather, it is up to us to address the outstanding issues rigorously - to look constructively for solutions that will bring about the early conclusion of an effective convention. The problem posed by chemical weapons is serious; a convention is needed without delay; this Conference has a responsibility to provide it.

The achievement of a global chemical weapons convention is one of the Australian Government's principal disarmament objectives. Our commitment to that objective is reflected in our active participation, over many years, in the negotiations in Geneva and our technical contribution to that process through, for example, the conduct of national trial inspections. An area of the convention with which Australia has been particularly associated in recent times, as you have been aware, has been those provisions which concern the interrelationship between States parties and their national chemical industries. This is of course a crucial aspect of the convention. It is imperative that the right balances be struck in the text - between the need to ensure that chemical weapons are not being produced by the chemical industry of a State party; the right of States parties to be able to engage in activities not prohibited by the convention; and for chemical industries to be able to operate without overburdensome monitoring or intrusion.

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The provisions which have been developed so far represent, in our view, a sensible approach, envisaging as they do specific levels and schemes of monitoring for different categories of schedules of chemicals, depending on the risk they are considered to pose to the aims of the convention. A lot of work has already been done in this area. The "rolling text" indicates, however, that a number of questions remain to be resolved. In the last couple of years, successive chairmen have initiated discussions with representatives of industry, to help them understand what the negotiations are seeking to achieve and to allow them to express their views and concerns to the negotiators. These consultations have been valuable initiatives, and Australia welcomes a similar exchange which is to take place under Ambassador Morel later this month.

But there will need to be further work done to achieve a universal understanding within the chemical industry of the implications of a chemical weapons convention, and the ways in which the industry can contribute to the elaboration of provisions which will be both practical and effective. In Australia's case, we have developed a very productive dialogue with our chemical industry on chemical weapons issues, encompassing the CW convention negotiations, over a number of years. Our industry has stated publicly its commitment to a CW convention and its total opposition to chemical weapons. Such a dialogue between governments and their chemical industries can be of enormous benefit for the convention from two perspectives: in resolving outstanding questions and thereby facilitating the early conclusion of the convention, and in ensuring that the convention is implemented effectively, both for government and industry. Through this dialogue, industry will be able to develop its understanding of its role and responsibilities in international endeavours to eradicate chemical weapons, in particular the contribution it can make to a global, comprehensive ban on those weapons.

There is a need as we see it for this dialogue to be intensified, developed and extended to all relevant countries. It is for this reason that on 7 March I announced that Australia would host a Government-Industry Conference Against Chemical Weapons. The Conference will be held this year, from 18 to 22 September, in our national capital Canberra. The Conference will bring together governments and representatives of chemical industries world-wide, with the aim of raising their awareness about the problems of chemical weapons, and considering ways in which they can work together, in partnership, both internationally and domestically, in support of a comprehensive convention.

Australia has invited to the Conference all member countries of the CD, as you are aware, other countries with significant chemical industries and those countries with a particular interest in chemical weapons issues. Such participation will encourage the universal support which the convention must secure and which Australia is intent upon generating. It will be a joint effort designed to give, and which we believe will give, impetus to the negotiations here in Geneva. To facilitate the full and effective implementation of a convention, industry must appreciate its role in addressing the problem. Verification procedures under the convention will require the co-operation of industry to achieve full effect. The time to take this step is now, so that effective consultation begins while the convention is being negotiatied. Let there be no misunderstanding as to what Australia

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is about in hosting this Conference. It is fundamental to our approch that the Government-Industry Conference that we are proposing to host take place in the context of the important negotiations being conducted here, in the Conference on Disarmament, on a chemical weapons convention; that it support fully those negotiations; and that in its own way it contributes to and moves forward those negotiations. There is no separate agenda. This Conference is what we are about in pursuing chemical weapons objectives, and the universal chemical weapons convention is the only objective that we are seeking to obtain. We believe the Government-Industry Conference will provide that support and contribute to the early conclusion of that convention - which we must achieve without further delay.

In addition to bringing about an increased dialogue between government and industry, it is also important to ensure that those countries which are not members or observers of the CD be fully informed about the convention which is being negotiated, so that they can give it their support and become parties to it at an early stage. Australia has been active in international efforts towards this objective. In June 1988 our Prime Minister announced that Australia would launch an initiative to raise regional awareness about chemical weapons issues. In that respect Australian officials have visited South-East Asia, Indo-China and the South Pacific to promote understanding of and support for the chemical weapons convention. This dialogue will be followed by a regional seminar which is also to be held in Canberra on 3 and 4 August, which we believe will reinforce the growing regional consensus in support of a convention. This may be an example which could usefully be followed by other CD members in their own regions.

A nuclear test ban has been a sought-after arms control measure for over 30 years. It is the first item on the agenda of this Conference. In the late 1950s and again in the late 1970s - on both occasions in forums outside the CD and its predecessors - we appear to have come tantalizingly close to concluding a test ban. In the 1980s, when the CD has been the focus of activity for this objective, progress, as we all know, has been frustratingly elusive. Australia has felt this frustration keenly. For well-understood and universally acknowledged reasons, nuclear disarmament is the priority objective. This involves progressively eliminating the existing arsenals and a commitment by all States, preferably through the non-proliferation Treaty, to be non-proliferators of nuclear weapons. Australia is deeply convinced that an effectively verifiable test ban has an essential contribution to make toward this objective and should, therefore, be concluded as soon as possible.

For more than five years, regrettably, the necessary consensus on the formation of an ad hoc committee has foundered on the question of a "negotiating" mandate. Australia would strongly prefer direct negotiations toward a comprehensive test-ban treaty and understands those who have been reluctant to accept anything less. Our greater concern, however, has been to see the CD begin concrete work on the outstanding issues such as scope, verification and compliance. There is no doubt in our mind that essential work directed unambiguously at a CTBT can be done under a non-negotiating mandate. Accordingly, we have consistently urged that the CD not be prevented from doing the work essential to a comprehensive test-ban treaty simply because this work is not described as the negotiation of a treaty. It is, I have to say, an indictment of the CD's prolonged inertia on this central issue

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that there is a proposal for a separate conference to transform the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The CD itself has the authority, the permanence and the expertise to move forward on a CTBT, an objective that the overhwelming majority of the international community have repeatedly signalled they wish to see concluded urgently. We are encouraged by the movement toward a consensus that has emerged this year through the patient efforts of Ambassador Yamada of Japan. It is imperative that all members of the Conference display the necessary flexibility to allow the CD to meet its responsibilities and commence work toward a CTBT.

Effective verification of a comprehensive test-ban treaty will be strongly dependent on a reliable international seismic monitoring network. Australia has proposed that such a network be established promptly on the basis of existing assets, and subsequently developed to build confidence in its practical capabilities. Apart from being key participants in such a network, the nuclear-weapon States could make an important practical contribution by making available comprehensive data on their nuclear tests in accordance with the General Assembly resolution sponsored by Australia on the notification of nuclear tests.

The bilateral super-Power negotiations on nuclear testing are an important reality. Although the mandate for these negotiations is far more cautious on the timing of a CTBT than Australia would prefer, it remains a fact that these negotiations have the potential to make a significant contribution. In the Australian Government's view, it is entirely reasonable in contemporary circumstances to expect the super-Powers to lead the way, by negotiating promptly and expeditiously toward militarily significant interim limitations on nuclear testing.

The final issue that I would like to touch on more briefly today is outer space. From one perspective, we have collectively displayed an imperfect but still admirable degree of restraint in the military exploitation of space. The space age is over 30 years old and space programmes have been driven overwhelmingly by military requirements, and yet we have in practical terms very largely avoided extending into space the offence/defence competition so familiar from the other environments. As a consequence of this restraint, there is wide acceptance of the view that space assets have made, and continue to make, a strong positive contribution to peace and stability. It is sobering to speculate on the course of events over the past 30 years had we not possessed the communication, intelligence-gathering and surveillance/verification capabilities afforded by space assets. The Australian Government considers the protection of this state of affairs to be of central importance.

The objective of this Conference on this issue - and the objective proclaimed by the super-Powers in February 1985 - is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The word "prevention" in this context is especially significant. In all other environments we have had to set a much tougher goal, namely, stopping and reversing an arms race through seeking stability at progressively lower force levels. The Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space is of course aware of just how complex a field this is. I do not propose to comment in any detail on the issues that it has exposed: for example, the lack of clarity on key terms like "peaceful uses", the precise scope of the existing legal régime for outer space, or the

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different views on whether a meaningful distinction can be drawn between dedicated anti-satellite systems and systems with an incidental or potential anti-satellite capability. I would, however, like to make the observation that, in our view, preventing an arms race in outer space is crucially dependent on addressing the incentives to acquire space weaponry. We cannot expect to secure binding restraints on systems capable of destroying or disabling space assets unless we develop a clear and common understanding on acceptable functions for these assets.

The degree of interest in ballistic missile defences correlates strongly and inversely with the prospects of addressing the ballistic missile threat in other ways. Similarly, interest in anti-satellite systems will persist unless the functions performed by satellites stay within agreed parameters. Members of this Conference will recognize the linkage between this observation and Australia's long-standing proposal that the Ad hoc Committee consider measures to protect from attack all satellites and associated ground stations that contribute to strategic stability and the verification of arms control and disarmament agreements.

The Conference on Disarmament is conducting its work in uniquely propitious circumstances. To paraphrase the NATO declaration of 30 May this year, we can now exploit fully the potential of arms control to reduce the excessive weight of the military factor in international relations and increasingly to replace confrontation with co-operation. The Conference on Disarmament has the capacity to contribute substantively to this endeavour. The arms control agenda is extremely full. This Conference has a unique mandate for achieving real progress on that agenda. Our responsibility is therefore of vital importance, and we must fulfil that responsibility.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): Thank you very much for your excellent statement, Mr. Minister. I am sure that many of our colleagues will find in it a source of reflection concerning objectives that we share.

I should like to inform the Conference that the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth of the United Kingdom, the Honourable William Waldegrave, M.P., is the first speaker for the next plenary meeting on Thursday. I would be grateful if delegations are ready to begin the plenary at 10 a.m. so that we can hear the Minister's statement punctually.

Before closing the meeting I should like to remind you that the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons will meet immediately afterwards in Room V. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 15 June at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.